

RESUMED TESTIMONY OF PETER PIROGOV
WASHINGTON, D. C.
June 13, 1956

Mr. Morris. Mr. Pirogov, since you have been in the United States, have you been approached on any other occasion by persons you recognized as Soviet officials?

Mr. Pirogov. No, except one case which happened after Mr. Barzov decided to return to Russia, and at that time we met.

Mr. Morris. When was that?

Mr. Pirogov. In a restaurant here in Washington.

Mr. Morris. What happened at that time?

Mr. Pirogov. Well, it is hard to say. I still don't understand today what actually happened there. And if I can't tell --

Mr. Morris. Tell us what happened. You were there.

Mr. Pirogov. This is what happened. Barzov had gone from New York to Washington for good, with his plans to return to Russia.

Mr. Morris. He had left Washington and gone to New York?

Mr. Pirogov. No, he left New York and went to Washington to see officials in the Embassy to receive tickets for his ship or airplane on his way to Russia. And then after one week, I decide to send him a letter and meet him once more before he left the United States and tried to help him to change his decision about that.

Mr. Morris. You advised him, had you not, not to go back?

Mr. Pirogov. Of course, but this particular time I wanted to have one more meeting with him. And then the next morning -- well, I sent a letter, for instance, the next morning, I was not in my room in the hotel, but somebody, the manager, told me that some man was here and left a letter for me. I took that letter, that letter was Mr. Barzov, from Washington, from the Russian Embassy. In that letter he said, "I want to have a meeting with you in one condition that supposed to be without any witnesses, just you and me."

Mr. Morris. This is what the letter said?

Mr. Pirogov. Yes, his letter said that.

Mr. Morris. Do you still have the letter?

Mr. Pirogov. Oh, I think somebody has it. I don't. I think the FBI people, I don't know who. And then he said, "I want to meet you in the Three Musketeers restaurant", and he put in the same letter a small piece from a newspaper, advertising about that restaurant.

Well, he said, "I want to see you today -- "no, tomorrow at 5:00 o'clock."

Since I received that letter, I called friend of mine in Washington and asked him if he thinks it is okay that I will go and see Barzov. He said, okay. Then I take a train the next morning and come to Washington.

Well, I was afraid to go just by myself to that restaurant and see Barzov. I asked that friend if he will come with me. He said, "No, I don't want to go with you, but you supposed not to be worried; I will be there, or somebody will be there whom I know."

Now, he give me a plan of that restaurant.

Mr. Morris. Who gave you the plan of that restaurant?

Mr. Pirogov. My friend. He said, "You supposed to meet Mr. Barzov in the dining room, not in the bar room." Well, then I took a taxi and come to the restaurant, and I was waiting on the street. Well, it was about five or six

-2-

minutes and then Barzov come. He looked strained and tired and completely different in appearance from what he was before.

And he said, "Okay, let's go in the restaurant and have some talk." And then when we arrived in that restaurant and that barroom there, too many people over there, it is almost impossible to expect to find a table. Then the waiter come to us and say, "You looking for a table?" We said, yes, he said "For two?" And we said "Yes", and he said "Come with me."

And that table was already reserved for us, by whom I don't know.

Mr. Morris. By whom you don't know?

Mr. Pirogov. Yes. That table was close to the wall. He showed me a chair which was close to the wall. I was afraid to sit there and I just decided to sit on the chair which was opposite the wall. And then a waiter come and Barzov ordered two drinks. Then I ask the waiter if he had a dinner, because I had just come from the train and I want to have some dinner. The waiter said, "No, sir, that is not the dining room. We have a dining room just across the hall."

Then I recognized, I had made a mistake. I was supposed not to be there, but friends of mine would sit in the dining room. Then, I just wake up and said, "Well, I am sorry. Let's go to the dining room, and I want to have my dinner. And you can order drinks from here and they will deliver them to the dining room."

Well now, the restaurant, you know, the King Cole Room is on the right side and the dining room or restaurant, Three Musketeer, is on the left side; between the two halls is a small corridor. I was going first, I just stopped in the corridor, then I see two men from this -- three or four men from another side, you know, just located us in the center of that corridor. With our not talking or saying anything or any questions, I just, or somebody, hit me. Then, you know, another man took my arm and put it in back and put handcuffs on my right hand. Then in front of me a small man, I will say about five feet, took a pistol and I don't know what he started, but I just hit him with my leg. At that time another man took that pistol from his hand and knocked me in the head.

Well, now, that happened in the corridor between this hall and this hall, and the door in the dining room was locked. It was closed. Then, I just -- I mean I tried to give some signal to a friend of mine who was sitting in the dining room. I am sure he was there, but since it happened -- you know, just too many movements. Then I come too close to that door and knocked that door and the door opened and then, you know, many people there. I don't know, maybe ten or fifteen boys stand up and come out from that dining room I understand that the people who come from the dining room, it was people whom my friend asked to be there.

Mr. Morris. In other words, this other episode where someone tried to put handcuffs on you and pulled the gun on you was in the corridor concealed between the dining room and the bar?

Mr. Pirogov. Yes.

Mr. Morris. It was all concealed and hidden in there?

Mr. Pirogov. Yes. And then when these people come, friend of mine and his friends, well, that time fight started which I couldn't understand who is who and who hit whom. I know one thing, I have couple more in my head and face, and one man just tried to do every thing to put that second end of the handcuff on my wrist, you know, arm, but he couldn't, you know.

Mr. Morris. In other words, somebody was trying to forcibly kidnap you?

Mr. Pirogov. Yes. Well, it looked that way, is how it happened to me.

Mr. Morris. You know whether these men were Russians?

Mr. Pirogov. Well, I don't know. One thing I forget to tell you. Before I met Barzov, I step out from a taxi and then I thought Barzov already waiting for me inside. Then I come inside, in that entrance was small couch, two very young, I mean, two very pretty girls sitting on that couch, and when

-3-

I pass I heard a Russian word, "on", which means "him".

Mr. Morris. Which is Russian for "him"?

Mr. Pirogov. Yes. Then I was afraid, completely, you know what to do. You know people mention that is him, that concerned me. Then, I go out of there and I met Barzov and then, you know, we come in and that happened in that corridor, you know. And then my friend and his friend come to me, took a taxi and go to some house. I don't know, I think it was some hotel, and then some trouble come, because they couldn't remove the handcuffs from my arm.

Mr. Morris. They couldn't take the handcuff off your arm?

Mr. Pirogov. No, and it took about one or two hours, because, you know, too many keys they tried. At last they find one.

Mr. Morris. Who were these people who tried to remove the handcuff?

Mr. Pirogov. They were my friends.

Mr. Morris. Have you any reason to believe that the management of either the Three Musketeers restaurant or the King Cole bar, or any of the employees, such as the waiter, were a party to this thing that happened?

Mr. Pirogov. I am sure now, because the waiter, you know, the same waiter come first to me when I arrived first there to seek Barzov.

He immediately came to me and asked if I want to have a table. I said, "No, I wait for a friend of mine."

Then, the next time we arrive, both with Barzov, same man come and offered us table. When there were too many people. It was impossible to mention you can find table.

Mr. Morris. In other words, there was no other empty table in the whole restaurant?

Mr. Pirogov. No, that was the main point that I was surprised about. That seems to me like somebody ordered that table before or asked that waiter to have that table empty.

Mr. Morris. Did the waiter seem to know Barzov?

Mr. Pirogov. Yes.

Mr. Morris. What makes you say that?

Mr. Pirogov. Because just how he looked at him. We just come in, you know, and that man seems so familiar, you know, or like you meet somebody who knows you, but at that time I interpreted, then, because Barzov was staying one week in the Russian Embassy. The Russian Embassy was too close to the restaurant, to Three Musketeers.

Mr. Morris. What street is the Three Musketeers on?

Mr. Pirogov. Connecticut Avenue.

Mr. Morris. In other words, it is near the Soviet Embassy?

Mr. Pirogov. Yes. And I thought Barzov often come to that restaurant and that is why the waiter know him. But I don't know, but it was so -- everything was prepared.

Mr. Morris. Had you warned Barzov he would be shot in six months?

Mr. Pirogov. Certainly, I told him many times. We just sit at a table, we start talking. He look at me and said, "Well, you want to smoke a cigarette?" He opened a pack of Russian cigarettes, Kazebek. Well, I said, "No, I have mine", and I took some cigarettes. He look at me and said, "You think that is already yours, you qualified yourself like an American already." I said, "No, I am still not American, but I try to be." He said, "Nonsense."

Then, conversation is finished. He said, "that is before the waiter come,"

-4-

you know, for the order, and he said, "You see, I start writing, too, but I will write book which will be much better than any books which emigrants wrote here in America about Russia."

I looked at him and said, "You supposed not to be worried about your book. They will write for you. You will sign your name and after six months, the author will not be alive. They will kill you."

He said, "Well, after five or ten years you will be there, too."

He said, "I will be free, but you will replace my place where I come now."

That means, in two or three years he will sit in jail and then will be free. And they told him -- I forget to say that -- when he returned from Washington, he said, "They said to tell Pirogov if he don't want to return now, he supposed to know that five or ten years will pass, but he will be in our hands."

Mr. Morris. You, of course, have no intention of going back to the Soviet Union?

Mr. Pirogov. No, I would not even think about it. I have my family here. I mean, I am satisfied with living here, and I like to be here. Why I should want to go there? I just heard yesterday they killed him. Even if that was not happened, you know, I still don't think of going back there.

Mr. Morris. Thank you very much. That is all.